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May/June 2020

Volume 13 Issue 3

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OVER A DECADE OF SPORTS 2020

January/February

March/April

2019

January/February

March/April

May/June

July/August

September/October

November/December

2018

January/February

March/April

May/June

July/August

September/October

November/December

SEE PAGES 2 & 3 FOR ADDITIONAL PAST COVERS

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January/February

March/April

May/June

July/August

September/October

November/December

2016

January/February

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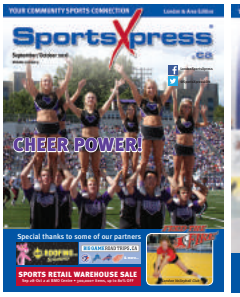
May/June

SportsXpress
FC London's new coaches ready for the challenge
London Majors season preview
Connect Sports' free youth sports day

July/August

September/October



November/December

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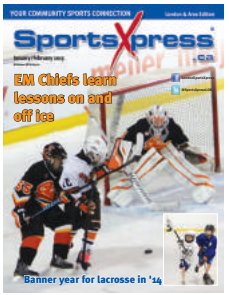

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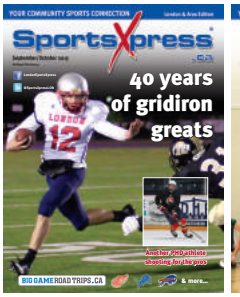

November/December

2014

January/February

March/April

May/June

July/August

September/October

November/December

SportsXpress
Aquatic Centre swimmers back in the pool
'Reach your goals at Runners' Choice'
Badgers open new indoor baseball facility

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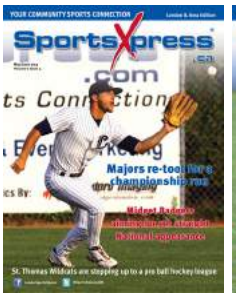
2013

January/February

March/April

May/June



July/August

September/October

November/December

2012

January/February

March/April

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November/December

2011

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March/April

May/June

July/August

September/October

November/December

2010

March/April

May/June

July/August

September/October

November/December

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“It is with heartfelt appreciation that we send a grateful ‘thank you’ to all those who are putting themselves on the line to keep the rest of us safe.”

London SportsXpress .ca

MAY/JUNE 2020
London & Area Edition

Velodrome a hidden gem

Contributions by Forest City Velodrome

It's a place where you can stay warm while riding your bike throughout the winter. Some say it's a hidden gem in London. It is London's indoor cycling track, Forest City Velodrome (FCV).

"The Velodrome provides a unique opportunity for people of all ages and abilities to experience riding a bike while having a blast," says Craig Saari, president of FCV. "It's a great place to socialize and stay active through the winter, and everyone is welcome!"

FCV offers 'Learn to Ride' (Track 1) regularly for those who want to try out the facility. All you need is a helmet and shoes, as FCV has track bikes that you can borrow to give it a try. Also offered at the Velodrome is 'VeloKids,' a kids learn-to-ride program. Youth who complete VeloKids have gone on to join Attack Racing, a London-based youth racing team which competes year-round in track, road and mountain biking, as well as cyclocross.

"VeloKids was an amazing program for my son," says Sarah, a parent of a VeloKids graduate. "The coaches are patient, friendly and encouraging, and they really made the experience so much fun. My son graduated and joined Attack Racing, and he LOVES it. My family is so happy that we found VeloKids and FCV!"

For more information on FCV, its programs or how to get involved, visit:

www.forestcityvelodrome.ca

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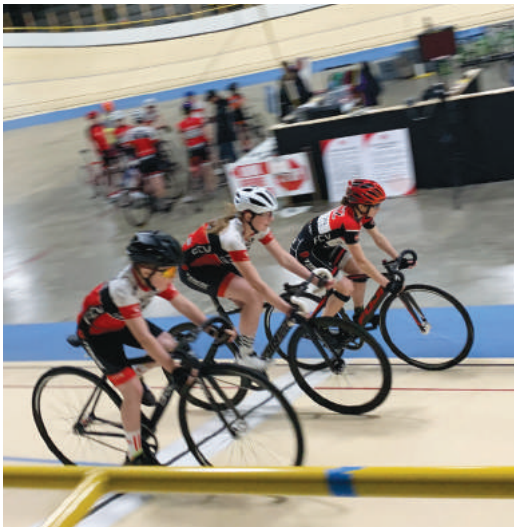
Coffee on the level

Velodrome Fundraiser

A neat fundraising program has been taking place at the Forest City Velodrome (FCV) through a partnership with Patrick's Beans. The Velodrome raises funds by selling 1lb bags of coffee to its members and friends. The end result? Visitors get to enjoy a great cup of coffee while helping to raise funds for the track.

"The program with Patrick's Beans has been amazing," says Craig Saari, FCV president. "There are many options to choose from, and the beans are remarkable! We order on a weekly basis and fresh beans are delivered. We have been running it for several years now and plan to continue for the future. It's a great deal, and everyone wins!"

www.forestcityroadraces.com



The Forest City Velodrome (FCV), an indoor cycling track in London, offers people of all ages with the opportunity to bike during the winter months. The Velodrome offers 'Learn to Ride' programs and other programs for kids eager to get on the bike and have a lot of fun.

thelineup

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Online workout program!

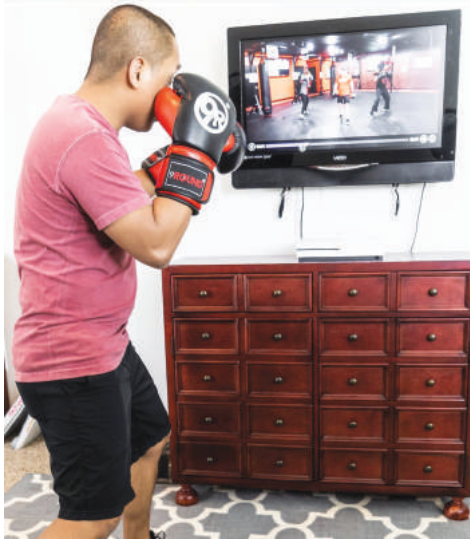
Submitted by 9Round London

We have temporarily closed our doors due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but we have not forgotten about our members – and anyone else looking to keep up with their fitness goals. We have created new fun online workouts – with a new workout released every day! These workouts are geared towards kickboxing and fitness, and they can be done with no extra equipment.

The workouts feature three people, and each has someone providing constant feedback on how to perform the movements. So, even if you are brand new to kickboxing, you can get the hang of it fast – and feel safe and confident! The nice thing about being at home is that you have a lot of free time to work on whatever you want. It's very easy for people to forget about their goals and wait a few months to get back on track. We know that consistence is one of the main things you need to get long lasting change, and we are excited to be able to help as many people as we can to keep motivated.

If you would like to try out our online workout program, go to www.9round.ca/fitness/London-ON and fill out some basic info and you will be able to access a free workout.

www.9round.com



During the COVID-19 shutdown, 9Round London has been providing online daily workout programs that include plenty of feedback from instructors – for brand new kickboxers and seasoned veterans alike!

SportsXpress Network

MAY/JUNE 2020

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Is your business ready for prime time?

Submitted by GOT GAME Marketing

Serial entrepreneurs Greg Matthison and Walter Browning are excited to announce the next evolution in their series of marketing businesses: GOT GAME Marketing.

"With our past businesses, we've experienced the confusion associated with digital marketing, and we've dealt with experts who ended up making it more frustrating at times," said Matthison. "But we still had hope, and we knew there was a massive opportunity to grow our businesses in the digital world. So, we persevered and assembled an all-star team of our own to create a digital marketing agency that includes industry experts who not only understand the power of digital marketing, but who understand the process and can effectively communicate with business owners and marketing directors."

A Straightforward Approach

In the world of digital marketing, the game is always changing. Not keeping up with the latest trends means you are missing out on growing your business. Our team's combined 30 years of marketing and business management expertise means that we understand the challenges faced by many business owners. Partnering with us will give you peace of mind knowing that your business is winning the game.

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Gearing up for potential fall season

Submitted by London Minor Football Association

Even as our preparation continues for the fall football season, the LMFA is currently monitoring the COVID-19 situation in Ontario. The health and wellbeing of our community is always our top priority, and we want to thank the essential and frontline workers who have been keeping us safe during this difficult time.

No one can say for sure when things will return to normal. We are hopeful for the best, but we're prepared for anything. So, we are continuing to get ready to take the field in August. Our coaches are preparing game plans, and we have booked field time from the City of London and the TVDSB for practices and games.

Our equipment room is being cleaned, and all our equipment is sanitized using our ozone cleaning machine as we do every year. We will have new procedures in place for equipment pickup to help keep everyone safe, and we will be following any and all guidelines from the government going forward regarding the season. These are challenging times, but we look forward to working together to get the players back on the field as soon as it is safe to do so.

Our summer events, including our annual passing camp and a new lineman camp, are on hold as of now. Please visit our website for updates. We will be posting training tips on our Facebook and Instagram to help you stay active at home.

Registration for the fall house league season is open online for everyone in the Under 10, Under 12 and Under 14 age divisions. Registration deadlines and information will be updated as needed and posted on our website. Please visit www.lmfafootball.ca or call 519-852-4465 for more information.

www.lmfafootball.ca

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2019 Atom U12 championship coach Paul Politis (right).

Matt Black from the Toronto Argos at LMFA indoor camp

LMFA athlete Jacob Sheardown meets Matt Black

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Recruiting and retaining officials

Submitted by London Football Officials

The London Football Officials has been around since the 1950's and serves all tackle football in the city of London. Our clients include London Minor Football, High Schools, competitive summer leagues of all ages, and Canadian Junior (Beefeaters). We also support Western University with off-field officials.

Our goal is always to work with our customers to make the game of football as safe and fair as possible. We have members with all types of experience – from people who have never played the game to ex-Canadian Football League (CFL) players.

Being part of the London Football Officials is truly a great way to stay part of the game when your career as a player is over, or if you're a fan and looking to learn all aspects of the game. After all, officiating offers the best seat in the house. Getting started is easy, and you can contact Trevor Semple at tsemple@uwo.ca to learn how to get involved.

We train hard, and football officiating is a year-round sport for us. Our biggest challenge, like all sports officiating, is recruitment and retention of younger people and former players.

Why is that so? Unfortunately, one of the reasons is a growing culture that has allowed parents, spectators, players and coaches to feel it is okay to abuse and be overly critical of officials – without having walked in our shoes. We have been yelled at – on and off the field – and have even been victims of threats of violence. No wonder it can be difficult to attract young people to officiating – in any sport – when the pay is the same as working at a fast food restaurant and the experience includes being yelled at.

An officiating crew including members of the London Football Officials organization. Individuals in the photo include (left to right): Cody White (official from Hamilton), John Burke, Kevin Mickleboro, Gord Cockburn (out of town official), Jason Fletcher, Paul Pook, and Todd Cousins.

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We have recourse (including penalties) for abuse when it comes from the coaches and players, but when a parent literally follows an official to their car yelling threats and insults, the only penalty, sadly, is to lose that official. This is not okay, and no official should have to put up with that. We need a societal shift in the way people are treated on the job.

In the officials' case, that job is calling games to the best of one's ability. Our officials are trained and work very hard to better themselves and their craft.

We're hopeful that the culture shifts in the other direction following the COVID-19 crisis when sports leagues get back underway, and that officials are treated with more respect and dignity. And we're hopeful that more young people choose to pursue officiating as a way to be part of the great game of football.

We have had so many talented and great people as part of London Football Officials, and we're excited about the future and the next wave of talent to take over the reins.

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To all Eager Beaver families...

Submitted by Eager Beaver Baseball Association

I hope everyone is doing well. I just want to assure you that Eager Beaver Baseball Association has put plans in place for the 2020 season!

Unfortunately, with the closure of schools due to the coronavirus outbreak, our preseason clinics were canceled. Our usual seasonal start in May for evaluations and practices are also most likely to be delayed. However, with what is happening in the world [with the COVID-19 pandemic], we are prepared to make changes in the schedule to accommodate the upcoming season.

We will have to wait to see what the City of London says in the upcoming weeks to know what these changes will be so that we can then announce them to you. Please know at this point that I am in constant contact with the City and other organizations to ensure that we are all in communication about the upcoming season.

EBBA has been an organization since 1955. We have been through some tough times before – including a baseball strike. We know that these are tough times that affect everyone. I want to assure you that EBBA is in a sound financial position to honour all refunds – or credit registrations for next season if we are unable to play this year. Late registration fees will be waived this season.

Our program represents the efforts by the current and past directors of EBBA to ensure that all boys and girls have the opportunity to play baseball in a safe organization. Each EBBA elected director has put timeless efforts into ensuring the love of the sport is reflected in EBBA. Rest assured that the current directors are planning for our 66th season this year! This includes the continuing slow but rewarding process of turning Mornington Park into our field of dreams.

The directors involved are volunteers – some with children that play, but most without. Frank Colman Jr., the son of Frank Colman, who founded our association, once told me that it doesn't matter who throws the first pitch as long as it's thrown.

I have been involved with EBBA for over 40 years, and EBBA has had an incredible impact on my whole life and continues to. I hope more of you decide to join in helping with this incredible organization. I am sure that soon we will hear the call of the umpires, "LET'S PLAY BALL." To my EBBA family, I wish you all to be safe and send all my love.

President of EBBA,
Rick Peters

For updated information, visit ebba.ca or email info@ebba.ca.

www.ebba.ca

Flashback photo!

Winter Games synchro success

Submitted by the London Synchronized Swimming Club

The London Synchro Club had two teams travel to Orillia on February 27 to represent the club at the 2020 Ontario Winter Games. These two teams attended a qualifying event back in January and had to place in the top two spots in their age category and region in order to move on to the Ontario Winter Games. The London Synchro club had swimmers participate in five events in Orillia: 11-12 Team; 11-12 Duet; 13-15 Team; 13-15 Duet; and 13-15 Solo. All swimmers had strong performances!

www.londonsynchroclub.ca

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Waiting to Play Ball!

Submitted by London Mens Baseball League

There is no joy in Mudville. You may remember the famous poem 'Casey at the Bat.' The poem is about the hope of getting the team's star player, Casey, to bat when the team is down two runs in the bottom of the ninth inning.

Casey eventually got his at-bat – and struck out. We are hoping that is not the fate of our 2020 LMBL season. We continue to hold out hope that we will get a chance to bat this season, let alone in the bottom of the last inning with the game on the line.

With that said, we are all on a National and Global team of a different sort, combatting Covid-19. We will put our bats, baseballs and gloves away for the time being until we know that our loved ones, teammates and complete strangers are safe from harm.

The LMBL will be following Baseball Ontario recommendations, along with that of our federal and provincial health officials, on how to proceed with our 2020 season – if it is to be.

We would also like to give a big tip of the cap and thank you to all frontline workers, essential workers and health-care providers, along with all those staying home and doing their part to flatten the curve.

From our scorekeepers, umpires, managers, players and our entire LMBL family, please practice social distancing, stay safe and healthy. Once we get back in action, perhaps social distancing will help our game by making those leadoffs from first base just a little bit bigger!

There will eventually be joy back in Mudville, and we hope to see you on the field when it happens!

www.lmblbaseball.ca

LMBL action at historic Labatt Park. The league is hopeful to play this summer, but the focus first is on the health and safety of everyone during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Members of the London Synchro Club fared very well at the 2020 Ontario Winter Games back in late February. Two teams of swimmers from the Club participated in five different events in Orillia, showing well in each performance.

A successful recruiting campaign

Contributions by London Majors Staff and photos by Matt Hiscox Photography

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Roop Chanderdat, Co-Owner, GM and Field Manager of the London Majors, had a very busy offseason putting together a solid team for the 2020 season. While an Intercounty Baseball League (IBL) season is very much in the air due to COVID-19, the Majors will be a talented bunch if or when they get the chance to hit the field.

Starting with core local players, Chanderdat brought back veteran starters Cleveland Brownlee (DH/1B), outfielder Byron Reichstein, catcher Mike Ambrose and pitcher Owen Boon. Next, he focused on key role players from 2019 and brought Evan Britt (utilityman) and P/OF Robert Doyle back into the fold.

Addressing the pitching staff, Chanderdat recruited a number of solid arms, including familiar faces Ayden Hannon (a London Major in 2019) and Dylan Brooks (a Major in 2018 who is coming back from arm surgery). Pitching recruits also included a pair of arms from Quebec – Rene-Dave Pelchat and Fernando Fernandez-Beltran (obtained in a trade with the Guelph Royals) – as well as Josh Krstulovich (Oshawa, ON), a former Durham College pitcher, and Pedro De Los Santos (Toronto, ON), who played for the IBL's Toronto Maple Leafs last season.

Among the four import spots available, Chanderdat signed Jose Vinicio, a shortstop from the Dominican Republic who reached Double-A while playing for three MLB organizations (Boston, Chicago and Arizona), and Rodrigo Ayarza, a middle infielder from Panama who reached High-A and played in the Texas and Houston organizations.

Chanderdat also nabbed pitcher Edwar Cabrera (Dominican Republic), who reached the major leagues, starting a pair of games in 2012 for the Colorado Rockies, and Juan Benitez, a fellow Dominican who pitched for Quebec in the Independent CanAm League in 2018.

On the hitting front, returnees Ismael Pena (an OF/P who was a second-team All-Star in 2019), Josh Williams (1B/OF), and catcher Jonathan Thibodeau were signed, as well as new recruits Julian Johnson (Mississauga, ON), a 1B/3B who played for Burlington and Toronto in the IBL from 2016-2019, Alex Hendra-Brown, a BC-born outfielder with playing experience in Sweden and Australia), Max Von Gemmingen (Brampton, ON), a utility player who attends Division I Spring Arbor University, and Udhay Bal, another utilityman from Brampton, ON who attends Mount St. Marys University.

Finally, there were several local players looking to crack the roster, including outfielder Rhys Cornell, infielder Jordan Camara, and catcher Damon Crumplen. In other words, it was a very busy – and successful – offseason of recruitment for the 2020 London Majors. As of early May, it was unknown whether there would be an IBL season this year, due to COVID-19, but it's clear that if there is, the London Majors will make a lot of noise with a talented and diverse roster.

www.londonmajors.com

The London Majors made a recruiting splash during the offseason, signing numerous new players to fill the many departures from last year's team. But there were key returnees, too, including (from left to right): Cleveland Brownlee, Byron Reichstein, Mike Ambrose and Owen Boon.

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Award winners honoured

Submitted by the Western Mustangs

With the COVID-19 pandemic causing closures across the country, the Annual Mustangs Athletic Gala was one of many year-end Mustangs events to be cancelled. However, to maintain the spirit of celebrating Western's extensive list of talented student-athletes, the month of April was designated as the 'Mustangs Season of Celebration.'

Each day in April, Western Mustangs Athletics featured athlete and team awards on its official social media channels (which would normally be done during the Annual Gala). This year's major award winners included...

Male Athlete of the Year

The Mustangs' Male Athlete of the Year Award is presented annually to a male student athlete who has achieved outstanding success representing Western at the provincial and/or national level in the current Intercollegiate season. This year that athlete was Swimming All-Star Sebastian Paulins.

From being named OUA Male Swimmer of the Year to winning the 2020 Dr. Jeno Tihanyi IM Excellence Award after earning gold in the men's 400m IM medley, Paulins was well-deserving of this year's title. His season even included breaking a 14-year-old OUA record by 0.5 seconds on his way to clinching gold in the men's 1500m freestyle event. Paulins totaled four individual gold medals and one silver in the 400m relay.

Female Athlete of the Year

The Female Athlete of the Year Award is presented annually to a female student athlete who has achieved outstanding success representing Western at the provincial and/or national level in the current Intercollegiate season. This year's winner was Track & Field and Cross Country all-star Kate Current.

Kate's season was one to remember with a silver medal in the women's 1500m run at the U Sports Track & Field Championship, a pair of gold medals at the OUA Championship, and the Dr. Wendy Jerome Trophy for being an Outstanding Female Performer. At the U Sports National Championship for Cross Country, Kate finished 5th overall in a field of 156 runners and walked away with the title of First Team All-Canadian while earning her spot on the Canadian roster for the 2020 FISU World University Championship.

F.W.P. Jones Trophy

The F.W.P. Jones Trophy is presented to the Western female student athlete who, in the opinion of the Selection Committee, has made the greatest contribution to Intercollegiate Athletics within the University. This year's winner was April Clark of the Mustangs Women's Hockey team.

April was named a 2nd team OUA All-star in 2017-18 & 2019-20, a 1st team All-Canadian in 2018-19, and the OUA player of the year and forward of the year in 2018-19. She captained the Mustangs women's hockey team this year and was the 2018-19 Female Athlete of the Year.

Dr. Claude Brown Memorial Trophy

The Dr. Claude Brown Memorial Trophy is presented to the Western male student athlete who, in the opinion of the Selection Committee, has made the greatest contribution to Intercollegiate Athletics within the University. This year's winner was Mustangs quarterback Chris Merchant.

Merchant concluded his career at Western in 2019 by winning the U SPORTS Hec Crighton Award as the most outstanding player in the country. He completed his Mustangs career with a regular season record of 31-0 (and 40-3 including playoffs). Merchant was MVP of the Vanier Cup and Uteck Bowl in 2017, and MVP of the Yates Cup and Mitchell Bowl in 2018.

www.westernmustangs.ca

Swimmer Sebastian Paulins: Mustangs 2019-2020 Male Athlete of the Year

Kate Current (Track & Field and Cross Country): Female Athlete of the Year

April Clark (Women's Hockey) won the F.W.P. Jones Trophy

Quarterback Chris Merchant won the Dr. Claude Brown Memorial Trophy

Keeping connected!

Submitted by FC LONDON

The 2020 season had barely started when we found ourselves in what will one day be referred to as 'The Great Pause.' A chance for everyone to take a deep breath and step back from our usual hurried pace. London TFC Academy has taken this opportunity to engage with players, parents, staff and soccer fans in a different way – through remote engagement, training, curriculum and the sharing of thoughts and ideas.

Social Media Director Sindy Debenedictis says that the club now has over 3,000 followers on its Instagram @ LondonTFC.

"We've continued to communicate with players through educational games and social-distancing engagements, including encouraging players to upload training videos and post pictures with celebrity players they've met," says Sindy. "One player even shared an online video session they had with TFC legend and MLS All-Star Dwayne di Rosario. The response has been fantastic."

The club has also held educational sessions, including nutritional seminars with fitness consultant Jeanette Novak in tandem with FC LONDON alumni and UCLA player Kaila Novak.

"We've even done a Zoom meeting with Toronto FC President Bill Manning," says club president Ian Campbell. "Bill shared how the professional staff and players at TFC are managing with the shutdown and uncertain future of the 2020 season."

Just before the 'Pause,' many 2007 OPDL players bared cold the cold waters

of Lake Erie in the 'Childcan Polar Bear Dip' in Port Stanley, a fundraiser which supports children and families living through childhood cancer.

"Coach education is also continuing to be a priority, including a recent trip to Holland by myself and youth coach Phil Pacheco," says Ruben Quintao, the club's Youth Technical Director.

The pair travelled to Germany at the invitation of Jimmy Lucassen, who heads an academy team at professional squad Borussia Mönchengladbach. Over the week, they attended sessions for both youth teams and the senior squad who play in the German Bundisliga.

"It's great to see how the pros are doing it, and to bring that expertise back to the coaches and players in our program," said Pacheco.

The opening date of Tricar field, the future home of London TFC Academy, has been pushed back, but the grading, foundation, electrical and drawings for the clubhouse are already underway with an anticipated completion date of 45 days after work on the site can resume.

The FC LONDON League1 season for both the men's and (2019 champion) women's team has been postponed by Ontario Soccer. Keep checking the website for further details.

www.fclondon.ca

Players attend the Childcan Polar Bear Dip

Phil Pacheco and club youth director Ruben Quintao attend training sessions in Germany. Back row (left to right): Phil, Jimmy, Ruben. Front row: Players from the Borussia 2008 boys team

YMCA of Southwestern Ontario Launches Virtual YMCA

FREE YMCA Virtual Workouts, Healthy Tips and Activities NOW AVAILABLE TO ALL!

The YMCA of Southwestern Ontario has launched a Virtual YMCA - VirtualYMCASWO.ca - to maintain its commitment to healthy, active individuals, families and communities during COVID-19 physical distancing measures. The all-in-one site features recommendations on maintaining a healthy mind, body and spirit and regular Association updates, and is an access point to the YMCA's new virtual workout studio - YThrive Home. All resources are free and available to anyone seeking ways to keep active, not only YMCA members.

While we've closed our physical locations, our Ys are committed to keeping our communities healthy.

Olympic Karate safe and strong

Submitted by Olympic Karate

The management, staff and students of Olympic Karate Academy would like to send out greetings to the front-liners, the isolators, those who have been practicing safe distancing, and everyone who's fighting in their own special way to defeat this horrible COVID-19 crisis. While our doors are closed, we support you, we are with you, and we care about your safety.

To our dedicated students, and to other potential karate athletes, we are offering online training on Facebook and YouTube. You can find us by searching for 'Olympic Karate Academy.' Master Steve is also teaching virtual classes every Tuesday and Thursday at 5:00pm and 5:40pm on Zoom. Our classes are growing each week, so join in! We look forward to the time when all of you can come back to classes, but for now let's make our virtual training work for us. If you have requests or would like to see something on our online channels, please email us at Sensei@olympickarate.on.ca to let us know.

Olympic Karate, which is offering online training on Facebook and YouTube (and virtual classes on Zoom), is thinking about all the frontline workers and all those who have been in isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our management and staff have been taking the time during this crisis to make improvements and adjustments to our program so that when we rise like a phoenix from the COVID-19 ashes, we will be even awesomer.

Be safe.

www.olympickarate.on.ca

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Sempai Spotlight: Zach Drake

Submitted by Family Karate Centres

In the summer of 2008, Zach was invited to a birthday party hosted at Family Karate for one of its members. In the loot bag from the party was a voucher for a free month of karate. Who knew that a loot bag could change a person so profoundly?

September of 2008 was the beginning of Zach's passion for karate. His trial membership led him to becoming a full member in October, and he never looked back. Once Zach got a couple of belts completed, he joined the weapons program, which became his first love. Zach would go to the dojo every day for class, and an hour early on Saturdays so that he could get extra time on the floor to practice.

Zach Drake is a true Family Karate success story. From a free trial with the club to competing (and winning) in competitions across Ontario and in the United States, Drake developed a passion for karate that will last a lifetime.

This extra practice was noticed, and in 2009 Tina Hough, the head coach of the team, approached Zach and asked him if he would like to join Family Karate's competitive team. This is the time Zach fell in love with the bo and sparring. Zach competed in Ontario, New York, Pennsylvania, and Michigan, and he has made many friends along the way – and won dozens of first-place victories.

After many years of competing and gathering experience, Zach became a coach and mentor in 2014. It was an honour that Zach did not take lightly. He never missed a practice and was always available to attend tournaments to keep the team focused and on target.

As important as karate became to Zach, there was always school in the background. When it came time for Zach to think about his post-secondary education, the winner was the University of Ottawa. Zach entered the Political Science and Communication program at uOttawa. While he enjoyed his new experiences, he found that his future was in the trades, and he is now enrolled in Electrical Engineering at Algonquin College in Ottawa.

Whenever Zach would come home, he would arrange for private lessons and floor time for him and his bo. This past Christmas was no exception, as Zach made it to the dojo – even though he was only home for a couple of days.

Zach is a much better man for being in karate. Karate is in Zach's DNA, and it will always be part of his life.

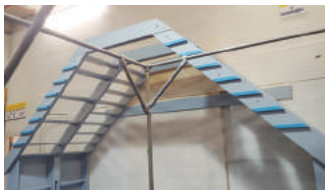
www.familykarate.ca

Looking ahead to new Obstacles

Submitted by CTC Obstacles

Wow, we are looking forward to Summer, we bet you are too!!

We all know how hard the COVID-19 quarantine has been for everyone – parents and children alike! During this time, we have built new obstacles, added to the big rig, painted obstacles and warped walls! We've even added a small soft area for children 3 and under. This area is free for them!



CTC Obstacles is looking forward to the return of activity post-COVID-19. In the meantime, the gym has added obstacles, painted, cleaned, and even added a small (free!) area for children 3 and under!

Your safety and health are of the utmost importance to us, and we will continue to keep a clean and healthy environment for all of our patrons.

CTC will be running summer camps this year once we know when we can all be opened again safely. We look forward to having children running around again!

Kids' classes will resume with an altered schedule, depending on who will be back to join us. A new, trial program has been designed for the summer. NINJA kids will start our level testing again in a whole new way!

We cannot wait to get you all back to the gym to Commit, Train, Conquer!

See you all soon!

www.ctcobstacles.ca

Relief Through Rolling protocol

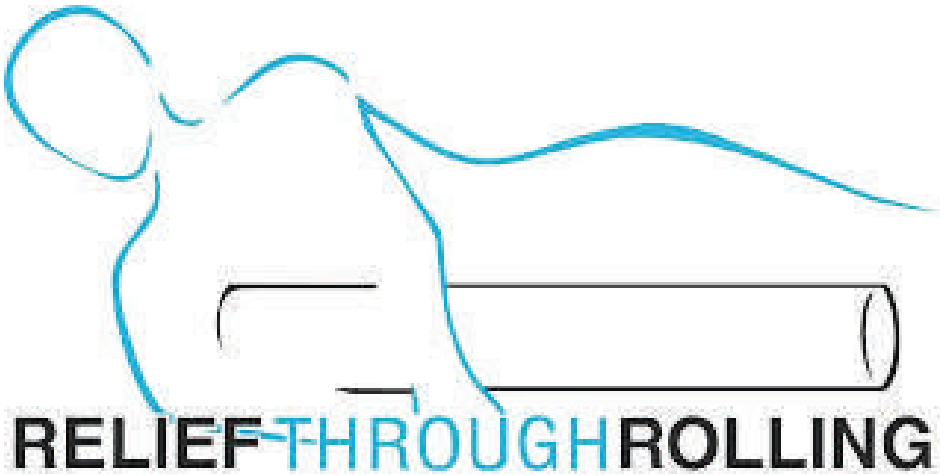
By Gwen MacLean for Living Balance Clinic

We are in unprecedented times. Organized sports are on hold, and gyms are closed. But this is no reason to stop your activity. You can still exercise in your own home or yard doing some off-season training for your sport and ramp up your sport recovery protocol.

I provide my Structural Integration clients with an exercise and/or injury recovery protocol called Relief Through Rolling. It is a pain-free foam rolling protocol that creates long term tissue change by tapping into the nervous system. The techniques work by supporting your body's biomechanical design as opposed to tearing it apart. Exercise recovery is about making the tissues you just worked supple and resilient so that you can do your activity all over again without pain and injury. Maybe you are already injured and in rehab. This protocol works for both scenarios.

Exercise recovery should feel good, be easy and not push the boundaries of your tissues. Relief Through Rolling techniques work with the nervous system to make the changes in your tissue. The techniques tap into the receptors in your connective tissue sending messages to the brain that the tissues can let go of tensional loads and strain patterns that are not serving your body well.

Relief Through Rolling techniques mimic the in-clinic sessions. With these techniques, you get high-level support for your body on your own at the time you need it. This protocol keeps the brain feeling safe by not invoking pain and creating positive change in the connective tissue.



GWEN MACLEAN RMT, CSI
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London Ontario
519-601-6602
www.gwenmaclean.ca
@structuralintegrationlondon

The added benefit of this protocol in our current crisis is that it reduces pain and down regulates the nervous system. If you are struggling with an injury, pain or stress, a 15-minute session on the foam roller using these techniques will allow your connective tissues to become more resilient, relieving pain and discomfort which will allow the brain to be calm.

I am using the Relief Through Rolling techniques daily to support my body during the spring yard work, treks on my bicycle, extra weight workouts, and to reduce the chatter in my brain before sleep.

If you are interested in a free half-hour online demo, contact me at mail@livingbalanceclinic.ca or at www.gwenmaclean.ca.

www.livingbalanceclinic.ca

Adversity and accomplishment on the ice

Submitted by EnergICE Synchronized Skating

On February 15, EnergICE Adult Synchronized Skating teams travelled to Amherstburg for the Deveau/Winfield Skating Competition. Both teams skated a season's best score, capturing the gold medal in both the Adult 2 and Adult 3 categories. The Adult 2 team was also awarded the Spirit Award.

Team EnergICE is comprised of skaters from Elgin, Middlesex, Oxford, Norfolk, Huron-Perth and Brant Counties, as well as Waterloo. Skaters range in age (from 18 to 55) and skating abilities.

Last season, Coach Wendy Coombs initiated an amalgamation between adult skaters from the St. Thomas and Woodstock skating teams.

"Both clubs had talented skaters who were struggling to host teams with a full roster of 16 skaters," said Coombs. "It was evident from the beginning that we had the right people at the table to make this amalgamation a possibility. After a few meetings and negotiations, the idea came to life."

Unfortunately, two months into the season, Coombs suffered a brain injury while coaching and was unable to return to the ice. But the teams continued with the help of other coaches, pulling together and learning their program off the ice.

"This incredible group of 30 women pulled together in a true sisterhood to finish their season," said Coombs. "They were forced early on to become united in this new challenge to succeed."

Membership has grown since the amalgamation. The Adult 2 team, which skates out of Woodstock, rostered 18 skaters this season with two associate members, while the Adult 3 team, which

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Athletes are alone – but together

Submitted by CheerStrike

Throughout this unprecedented time of uncertainty, the Royal Family has been working to stay connected and remember that even if we are alone, we are alone together. When the province forced all youth sport facilities closed, CheerStrike found ways to keep athletes connected to their coaches and teammates.

We knew that children would be suffering – not only with boredom, but because of the abrupt loss of connection, no chance to properly say goodbye, and no celebration to end an incredible year of competition. We wanted to help. While it is impossible to all be together at our gym, we have brought the training to everyone's living rooms! Thanks to Zoom, we have been offering weekly team practices as well as daily virtual classes. These practices give our athletes something to look forward to every week, and they allow the coaches to check in with how their athletes are coping.

Before everything shut down, four CheerStrike teams travelled to Florida to compete at the UCA International Championships. Even under the stressful conditions of things changing daily, and the unknown of what was to come, Virtue, Legacy, Nobility and Sovereignty made the entire Royal Family proud with four incredible runs on the largest stage we've ever been on. In very competitive divisions, we had a fourth, third, second and first-place finish! A huge congratulations goes out to our Senior Level 4.2 team, Sovereignty, for bringing home our first ever UCA Championship title.

We don't know when this will all be over and the gym can be full again, but we will be ready and we will be back, stronger than ever!

www.cheerstrikeroyals.com

With the help of Zoom, CheerStrike Royals athletes have been able to participate in weekly team practices and daily virtual classes!

Prior to the COVID-19 shutdown, four CheerStrike teams traveled to Florida to compete at the UCA International Championships. All teams fared well, including the club's Senior Level 4.2 team (Sovereignty) which earned CheerStrike's first ever UCA Championship title!

practices in St. Thomas, rostered 20 skaters with one associate member.

Coombs believes that skaters in their teens are hanging up their skates as singles skaters. But she believes there is so much more they can still achieve by joining synchro and potentially skating at a national or world level competition.

"I want skaters to stay in the sport longer," said Coombs.

The Skate Ontario Synchronized Skating Coach Mentorship program has been a huge help to Coombs.

"I am so appreciative of the mentorship I have received from Jenny Crichton-Beauchamp, a former World Champion," she said.

Due to COVID- 19, EnergICE has had to postpone their audition process. However, if you have skated in the last few years, you can forward a video or simply wait until Skate Canada gives the team permission to host a tryout. You can email the coach at wendycoombs02@hotmail.com or check out the team's Facebook page, titled EnergICE Synchronized Skating Team.

EnergICE Adult 3 Team

EnergICE Adult 2 Team

Cheer talent through the years...

Submitted by Power Cheer Gym

For over 20 years, the Power Cheer Gym has run Spring Tryouts, but 2020 has thrown us all a curve. As soon as we get the COVID-19 green light, like hundreds of other youth sport leagues and clubs, we will restart the engines by running drop-in sessions, tryouts and team assignments. All pertinent information for try-it/tryouts and open gym times at PCG will be posted on all social media platforms.

PCG coaches and athletes have stayed active with online training, team Zoom sessions, and all sorts of solo and family-focused activities. But we are sure looking forward to getting back to the mat. Twenty-two years of athletes, coaches and families generates thousands of pictures and memories, and the break has allowed us time to dip into the photo archives and pull up a few gems from our gym's past...

www.powercheergym.com

pcgvipers @PCGVipers

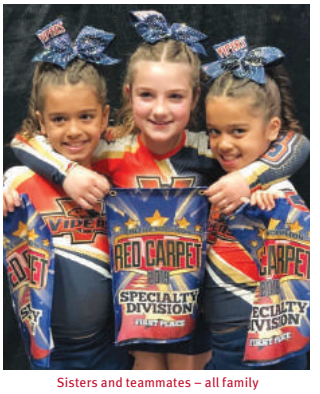
In 2005, PCG competed with the largest team ever on the mat (52 members!)

The postponement of the 2020 Worlds only makes us hungrier for '21

2017 Youth Team Champions in Florida

The friendships and memories last forever

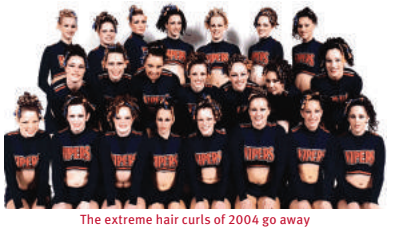
One of many great competitions in Myrtle Beach (2015)



Sisters and teammates – all family

Trained like Athletes

Loved like Family



The extreme hair curls of 2004 go away

2003 Senior Advanced in Columbus, Ohio

Standing tall in the NCA Arena 2006

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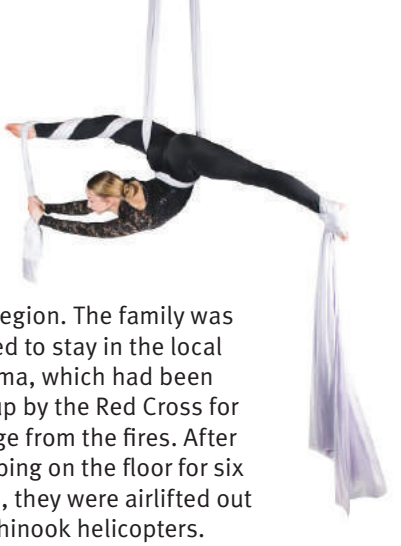
Home sweet home



Contributions by The Academy Circus

After years spent traveling the globe, Meaghan Wegg, a Cirque du Soleil performer, choreographer and coach, and her husband, Tim Buckley, a Cirque du Soleil physiotherapist, are making London their permanent home with their two young children.

It was two years ago that Meaghan opened her own circus school in the Forest City, called The Academy Circus, which operates in the same location as Power Cheer Gym, and Wegg will certainly now be focusing her energy on the school, which has technique classes, a competitive team and a performance team.

That latter performance team has held shows at special events, retirement homes, corporate events and festivals across Ontario and in Quebec and Newfoundland. In fact, the team is growing so much that Wegg recently contracted four artists on cruise ships to help their dreams come true!

"Meaghan's passion for circus arts is infectious," says Kara Nolan, Manager at The Academy Circus. "We are so happy to have her coaching back in London full time."

Over the past few years, Wegg has choreographed shows in China, Mumbai, Montreal and many other locations. She continues to work for Cirque du Soleil as an on-call Artistic Coach, while Buckley travels to Cirque du Soleil touring shows as a physiotherapist – and works locally for the Fowler Kennedy Sports Medicine Clinic.

Meaghan Wegg, who traveled the world as a Cirque du Soleil aerialist, dancer and acrobat, is now back in her hometown, settled with her husband, Tim, and her two young children as she runs The Academy Circus, which she founded two years ago.

Born in London and raised in Teeswater, Meaghan met her husband while traveling in Argentina. The couple were with their children camping in Mallacoota, Australia in January when they were caught in the massive bush fires in the region. The family was forced to stay in the local cinema, which had been set up by the Red Cross for refuge from the fires. After sleeping on the floor for six days, they were airlifted out by Chinook helicopters.

It was a horrible crisis to be in with young children, to be sure, but fortunately they were rescued safely after weeks living in danger. Their story was broadcasted on CNN, and even the Ellen Show interviewed them on the phone to make sure they were okay.

Now safe in London, notwithstanding the COVID-19 crisis, Meaghan is working with her athletes to coach and develop the next generation of performers. During the pandemic, she has been doing online training sessions and inspiring her young athletes.

Auditions for the competitive and performance teams will occur shortly after the COVID crisis ends. Follow us on Instagram and Facebook @theacademycircus and our website for up to date information.

To register for technique classes (beginner to elite levels for all ages), summer camp or book a performance email theacademykara@gmail.com.

www.TheAcademyCircus.com

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Ending on a high note

Contributed by John Paul II coaching staff

The John Paul II senior boys' basketball team ended the season on a high note by winning the Consolation Championship in Windsor during the OFSAA Boys AA provincial championships in March.

During their 2019/2020 campaign, the team posted an impressive 35-9 record, including going undefeated in league play and winning LDA and WOSSSA titles. Since the inception of the LDA league, the Jaguars have competed in six straight league finals, winning three times. They have also added two WOSSA titles, an OFSAA bronze medal in 2016, and now the 2020 Consolation Championship.

The Jaguars earned a bid in the OFSAA tournament after earlier winning a WOSSA title at South Collegiate. Standout center Caleb Moses Dutt, a grade eleven student who missed WOSSA with an injured foot, returned to action in Windsor. The team often showcased five grade eleven students on the court, each of whom made significant contributions. Two of these players were honoured at the Edmonds-Lodge, Thames Valley Regional Athletics Boys Basketball All Star Game. Emmanuel Akot was presented with the LDA Mr. Basketball Award, and Brendan Mudge was the all-star game MVP. Graduating player Jean Paul Rokundo was presented with the LDA Ted Earley award.

London's John Paul II senior boys basketball team – OFSAA Consolation Champions (2019-2020)

Coaching staff includes John Shoemaker (head coach, JP II teacher), Mariah Rockwood (assistant coach, JP II teacher) and Chris Synders (assistant coach, community volunteer). Coach Shoemaker, director of Orion basketball, also leads the new JPII basketball leadership academy. A former science teacher, he now teaches in the health and physical education department offering two related basketball courses for credit.

The future looks bright for Jaguar basketball!

Curious about Cupping Therapy?

Submitted by Pro Function Sports Injury Clinic

PRO FUNCTION sports injury clinic

If you've recently had an injury, been to a massage therapist, or simply follow fitness trends, then you may have heard of Cupping Therapy. It's a form of alternative medicine that has been around for several centuries. And it's gaining influence in North America – and not just limited to athletes and fitness gurus.

Cupping is non-invasive and easy to apply with the right education. It can be used in combination with deep-tissue massage to help reduce the pain and inflammation that comes with new or chronic injuries, improve circulation and blood flow, and assist in relaxing tense muscles.

How does it work? More common treatments, like massage therapy and foam rolling, affect the body's soft tissues through compression. This means adding a load onto the tissue and compressing layers of tissue together. When applied appropriately, this can be done in a way that pulls different layers of tissue in different directions, separating them, allowing them to move more independently, breaking down areas that are stuck together (called adhesions), and opening up channels for fluids to move more easily.

Cupping Therapy can be used as an alternative to compression therapies, separating soft tissue layers, releasing scar tissue adhesions, improving blood flow, reducing inflammation, and relaxing tense muscles.

Cupping Therapy works in a different way through soft tissue decompression – often called 'Myofacial Decompression.' This means that Cupping unloads and lifts soft tissue layers up and away from one another through a small vacuum-like suction created within each cup. This can be an exceptionally comfortable alternative to compression therapies – especially over a painful area – and it has the same ability to successfully separate soft tissue layers, release scar tissue adhesions, improve blood flow, reduce inflammation, and relax tense muscles.

If you're interested in trying cupping therapy, book directly online with Stephanie Van Erp.

www.profunction.ca

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Staying connected while staying in

By Richelle Hirlehey for Dance Extreme and photos by Henry Mendel

The social climate this Spring in Ontario has forced Dance Extreme to find innovative ways to keep dancers engaged and our dance troupe teams connected. As a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, we were forced to close our doors to our dancers – but to open our minds to new ways of teaching and learning online.

We began by launching our learning 'DX Dance at Home' web page to allow our dancers to keep training from home – complete with dance education games and activities, online pre-recorded classes, and a section to practice their recital dance from home. Two weeks into the pandemic, we launched a complementary schedule of online dance classes taught in real-time with our talented instructors facilitating these classes.

Dance Extreme recognizes the importance of remaining connected with our students during this time. The reasons are two-fold. First, similar to school, once students are out of the habit of something they do regularly, they can begin to lose skills that they have developed over time. Dance training requires dancers to maintain flexibility, agility and technical skill for the body to retain the muscle memory it has.

Secondly, children and youth thrive on social interactions, and when these are taken away some risk decreased mental health. Our dancers have worked hard for their training and we owe them the opportunity to continue training while at home. Online dance training will enrich what our dancers have learned in the studio and will continue to enhance their analytical and critical thinking skills. It will teach them that 'the show must go on,' even when plans change, or when challenges arise. Keeping active in a variety of ways, and cross-training dance classes with yoga, conditioning, stretch, meditation and visualization will help our students stay physically, mentally and emotionally healthy while social distancing or quarantined. Additionally, meeting online to take a class or have a team discussion promotes a sense of community and connection when they are not able to see their peers each day.

Dance Extreme has been thrilled to continue to offer dance training and education to its students and families in the hopes of maintaining a sense of normalcy and routine during a time when so much has happened around us.

www.danceextreme.com

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Dance Extreme continued training its dancers – online with the 'DX Dance at Home' program. Other classes and activities were also quickly offered online.

A teaching transition

Contributions by Donna Bayley

When the COVID-19 shutdown took effect in Ontario, Dance Steps London was forced to figure out how to help its dancers continue to learn and develop without being able to gather at the studio.

"The shutdown of businesses and schools happened so quickly, but I am so proud of our teachers and how quickly we got online and learned a new way of teaching classes," says Donna Bayley, the owner and Artistic Director at Dance Steps.

The studio held a couple of test classes with its Intermediate and Senior dancers the week after March Break. Then, the following week, Dance Steps offered more than 30 hours of online instructional classes – from all of its available staff members.

"We chose to offer the classes during the day, including over lunchtime, when the students would need a break from their schoolwork and when parents could relinquish the computer," said Bayley. "Students, as well as teachers, have been using iPads, phones, computers and big screen TVs to watch and instruct classes."

There have been some minor bumps in the road, as is expected with technology, but Dance Steps instructors, like Chimira Andres, Krista Conti, Erin Doherty, Pamela Garcia, Megan Gregor, and Sophia Noguera , have tackled the transition with creativity and enthusiasm.

"We have been advised by dance industry physiotherapists and sports doctors to keep the dancers strong and flexible, and not to worry about artistry/musicality and new steps," says Bayley. "The experts believe that, once the dancers are back to regular classes, they'll be able to pick up the artistic components if they are in shape."

Feedback from parents has been very positive, says Bayley.

Said one parent: "Thank you for taking the time to set this up for the students. I know my girls love that they can still dance. This is their first year, and I can see it making a positive first impression. Many thanks."

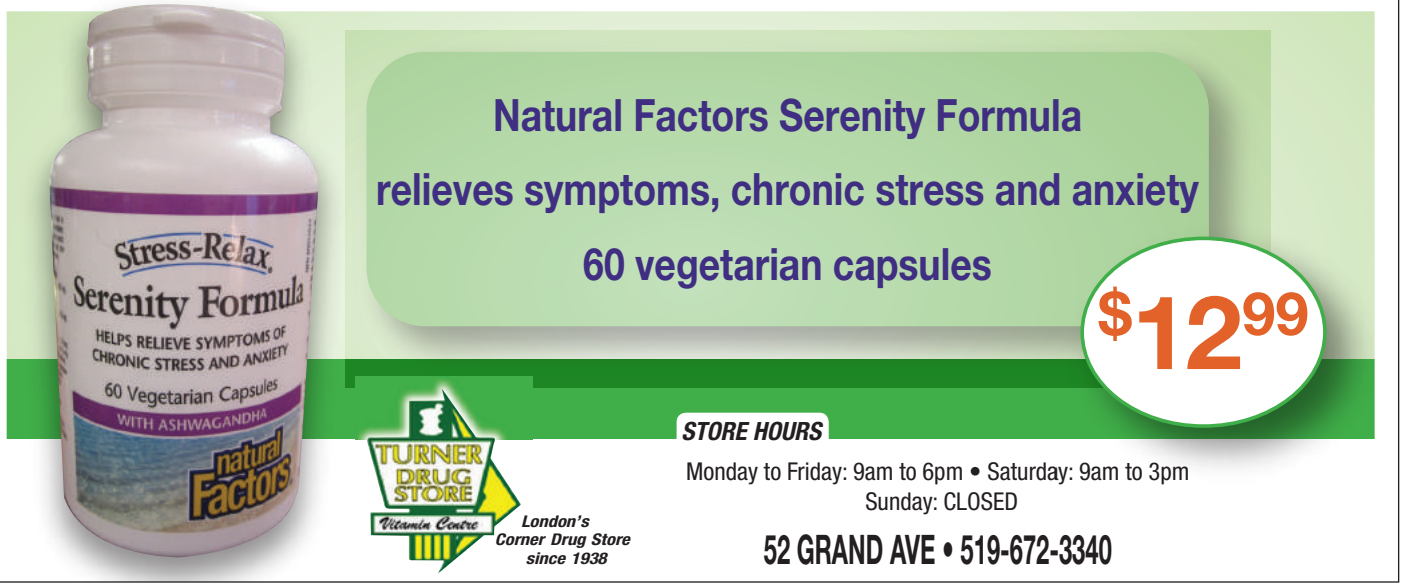
Bayley believes online instruction may just catch on and continue – in some form – even once physical distancing measures for COVID-19 are no longer in place.

"Nothing replicates live performances and classroom experiences, but I think with the dance world being so connected around the world, we may branch out more in an online capacity."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Dance Steps also started a private Facebook page for its registered dancers.

"The group has been posting photos/instructional info/fun games, colouring pages, and more!" says Bayley. "We have been trying to stay connected and feel like we are all in it together!"

www.dancestepsldn.com



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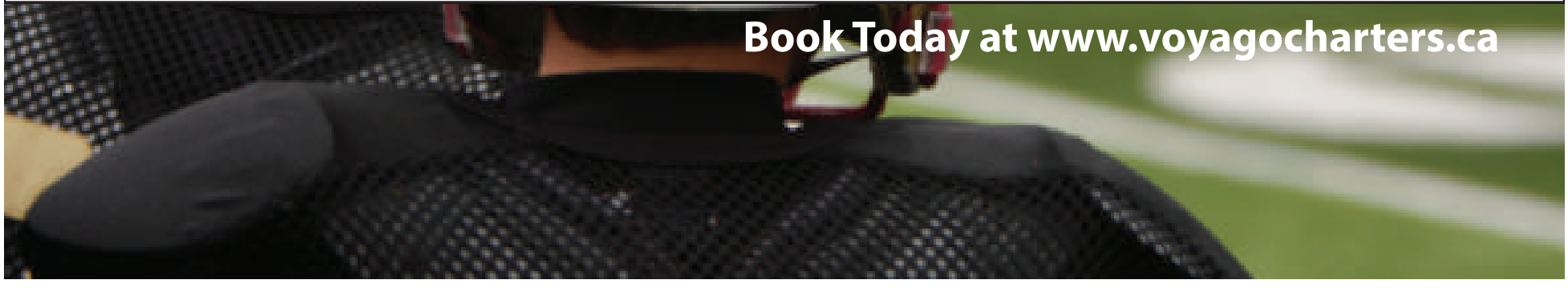

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One season ends, plans for another begin

Submitted by Komoka Kings

The Komoka Kings – and the entire hockey world and society as a whole – came to a sudden hibernation in early March. Although it was hibernation only from active on-ice action, as planning for a new season begins as soon as the previous season ends. One of the first actions by Kings management was to promote Assistant Coach Colin Martin to the Head Coach position to replace Ron Horvat who had guided the team from behind the bench the past two seasons.

The GOJHL was able to complete the first round of the playoffs and hand out the league's 2019-2020 season awards. Komoka Kings forward Dario Beljo was named a Western Conference First-Team All-Star, and Don Adams received the Kelly Hearn Award as Outstanding Volunteer.

Beljo, a Sudbury native, completed his second season with the Komoka Kings and was the team's leading scorer with 31 goals and 27 assists in 45 regular season games. Dario was a 10th round pick by the London Knights in the 2018 OHA Priority Draft.

Don Adams has been the Komoka Kings' Promotions Coordinator for the three years the team has been in Komoka. He has worked tirelessly in seeking community partners and organizing promotions to make the Komoka Kings games an exciting event and enjoyable for all the fans.

For the Kings' last regular season game, Don and his team of hard-working volunteers arranged for a memorable event for the Kings players who were finishing their last year of eligibility, including D'Arcy Panziera and Dowson Zheng, who each played three seasons with the Kings, and Austin Maietta, who joined the team mid-season from Markham.

The Kings look forward to next year!

www.komokakings.com

Three Kings players who completed their eligibility this year included veterans D'Arcy Panziera (left) and Dowson Zheng, as well as Austin Maietta (right), a key mid-season acquisition.

Kings player Dario Beljo was named a Western Conference First-Team All-Star for the 2019-2020 season.

Aeros Fly High in Montreal

By Jen Gallagher and photo by Peter Gallagher

Montreal will always be a special place for the members of the 2019-2020 Oakridge Aeros Peewee MD hockey team. Coming off two tournament wins earlier in the season (in Stratford in September and Cambridge in November), the boys were excited to head to Montreal for the CAN/AM tournament in mid-February – especially after working so hard off the ice to fundraise for the trip (and, of course, working hard on the ice at practices).

Oakridge Aeros Peewee MD Hockey Team
Back row (left to right): Greg French, Rich De Grandpre, Steve Milne, Kirby Oudekerk. Middle row: Luke MacMaster, Ben Ferguson, Brayden Thorne, Connor McLeod, Brady Milne, Bob French. Front row: Peter Gallagher, Brady O'Halloran, Kaleb Oudekerk, Jack De Grandpre, Ben Hudson, Reid Palser, Kaeden Chortos, Spyros Lerikos. Goalies: Naithan French, Isaac Taylor. Special mention: Simon Sterling (not pictured).

The boys had a great time riding the bus down to Montreal and getting hyped for the tournament. Their first game was against the Laval Dynamos, and they came away with a convincing 5-0 win. Next, it was Mimico Blue, and the Aeros won again. Six of the Oakridge boys participated in a skills competition, winning the relay and placing second in the shootout competition.

Meanwhile, the third game continued their winning streak, as the team beat the Princeton Tigers from New Jersey. The Aeros' undefeated run put them into the finals, where they faced off in a rematch against Mimoco Blue from Etobicoke – a very good team.

The final was full of excitement, and after three periods the score was tied 2-2. It took three(!) overtime periods to decide a winner. In that third extra frame, the Aeros scored with 1:17 left to capture the winning trophy. The victory is a great memory for all. So, too, was the Habs game the players enjoyed, plus the experiences at some fabulous restaurants and some sightseeing!

Go Aeros go!

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A timeless philosophy

Contributions by Red Circle Hockey Club

It's a milestone year for the Red Circle Hockey Club in 2020/2021 – the impressive 50th anniversary of the organization, which traces its creation back to 1971. Today, the originating philosophy continues to be the driving force for the hockey club: 'Equal Opportunity Regardless of Ability.'

There was a day when London had only four skating pads (Silverwoods, Farquharson, Carling, and Kinsmen), each of which was outdoors, and when minor hockey was hardly heard of. Organized youth hockey eventually took off, including at rinks like Stronach Arena (the home of Red Circle), and the Ontario Minor Hockey Association (OMHA) was the early (self-appointed) governing entity for all of Ontario.

The OMHA set the rules. But people like Mac Beach, Al Langille, and Jim Leonard, Red Circle visionaries, felt there were kids (and parents) who did not want to play stringent competitive hockey. These kids were not your superstars (nor did they want to be). They just wanted to be involved in a hockey program where they would be treated equally and get as much ice time as the other boy or girl.

The Stronach Minor Hockey League evolved from Mac's dream and provided a 'house league' program for these young kids. There was still competition between the teams, but it wasn't 'win at all costs.' Soon, the league grew and encompassed players from ages 5 to 17. Membership in the club grew, and in 1971 the league was incorporated as The Red Circle Hockey Club.

Since then, many thousands of kids and multiple generations of players have gone through the Red Circle program. Today, Today, the league consists of dozens of teams and more than 1,000 players aged 4 to 20 (from Mite to Juvenile). Red Circle caters to all levels of hockey ability.

Besides a fun House League program, which continues to grow, the Red Circle Hockey Club also has a Select program which travels and competes against other centres in southwestern Ontario. Players who are registered and play in the House League program make up the Select teams.

Registration is open for next year. Early bird pricing has been extended to June 1. One thing players can be guaranteed from registering with Red Circle? 'Equal Opportunity Regardless of Ability.'

www.redcirclehockeyclub.com

Thousands of kids and multiple generations of players have gone through the Red Circle program. The most famous? Former NHLer Eric Lindros, who began playing in the league's Tyke Division before eventually becoming an NHL star. Shown here is Lindros' team photo with Red Circle.

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A successful season cut short

By Sarah Jean Maher and photo by Matt Hiscox Photography

The London Knights wrapped up a 92-point season that landed them atop the Western Conference for the second consecutive year. They boasted a well-rounded squad both up front and on the back end, had an especially strong second half – riding 10 straight wins on their way to the top – and registered 40 wins, a familiar feat for the dominant club. Between rookie records, coaching accolades, a well-represented Team Canada group, and a Patrick Kane jersey retirement night, the Knights had a lot to celebrate this year.

Brochu emerges as top netminder

Straight out of Junior C, to say that Brett Brochu's first year in net for the Knights was a good one is an understatement. The netminder capped off a record-breaking season by winning the F. W. 'Dinty' Moore Trophy for the lowest rookie goals-against average at 2.40. In the 42 games Brochu suited up for, he posted one of the league's winningest records at 32-6-0-0 and finished with the league's third-highest save percentage at .919.

Brochu's 32 wins also set a new record for the most victories by a 16 or 17-year-old first-year goaltender in OHL history. At the end of the season, he said he attributed much of his success to patience and confidence, but also to the deep team in front of him and a guiding hand in fellow netminder Dylan Myskiw, an overage pickup early in the season.

Team Canada's gold medalists turn on the jets

It was Connor McMichael's strongest season yet, and he impressed both at the OHL and international levels. The Washington Capitals first rounder finished out his third year in London with 102 points (in just 52 games), including finishing third in the OHL in goals scored with 47.

McMichael also brought home a gold medal with Team Canada at the World Junior Championships alongside teammate Liam Foudy. In just 48 games, Foudy matched his previous best 68-point total – half of which came over an 18-game point streak that started on Jan. 26 and concluded with the season's abrupt end. The fourth-year veteran also got a taste of the NHL when the Columbus Blue Jackets called him up on an emergency basis for two games on the big stage during which he earned an assist.

Applause for the Hunters

Another big year for coach Dale Hunter came with another milestone. The Knights' bench boss became the third coach in OHL history to earn 800 career wins this past January. Along with brother Mark, the Knights' general manager, Dale also led Team Canada from behind the bench to win the country's 18th gold medal at the World Juniors. And, of course, he led his Knights to a 40-win season and a first-place finish in the West.

A pair of point-producing defencemen

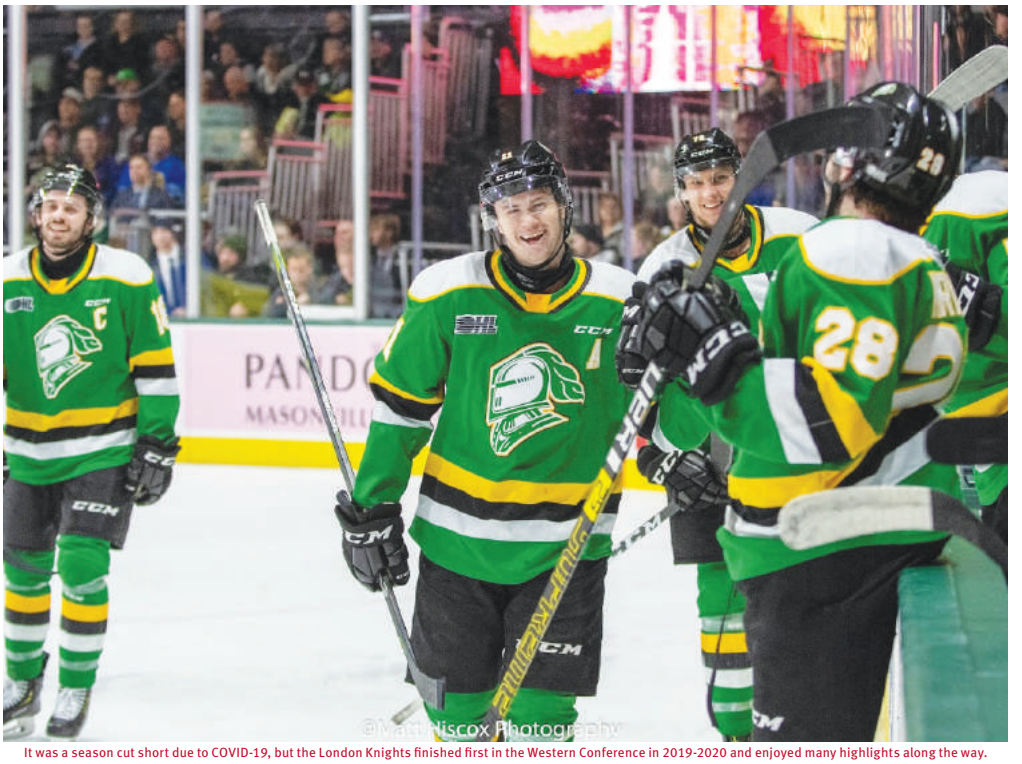
The Knights were strong on all fronts this season, but the high-charting efforts of Ryan Merkley and Alec Regula deserve to be highlighted. Regula, a 6-foot-4 Chicago Blackhawks prospect, amassed 27 goals – the league-highest among defenceman and most by a Knights blueliner since 2001-02.

The elite playmaking abilities of San Jose Sharks pick Ryan Merkley, a new addition to the London lineup this season, helped round out one of the strongest defensive corps in the league. The fourth year OHLer boasted a career best 76 points, good for second among all OHL blue liners.

Evangelista makes a statement

Another great Knights story in 2019-2020 was the play of Luke Evangelista, who followed up a scoreless 27-game rookie campaign last year to explode for 61 points in 62 games this season. The sophomore skater found the scoresheet often, tallying 23 goals – a steep jump and a pretty good feat when you're in the NHL Draft spotlight. Following his breakout year, NHL Central Scouting listed him 39th among all eligible North American players.

www.londonknights.com



It was a season cut short due to COVID-19, but the London Knights finished first in the Western Conference in 2019-2020 and enjoyed many highlights along the way.

Where the story began...

Submitted by EnviroNize

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Members of the EnviroNize team (left to right): Leo Cuarteros, Operations Manager; Phil Pecoskie, President; Denis Haxha and Rob Horst, Business Development

Today, many more additional registrations have been achieved and others are pending, as **EnviroNize®** makes its debut across many market verticals.

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